

send packages from home every week. The boxes that just arrived for Todd and his unit include books, magazines, videos, DVD's, snacks and personal items. Best of all, 200 of Todd's fellow soldiers will receive a card of their own for 60 minutes of long distance calling time. Three weeks ago three boxes were shipped that included a Christmas tree, decorations, cards, pens and stationery for their personal use.

I applaud the partners of Bell, Boyd and Lloyd for their efforts, not only during this season, but for their caring and compassion throughout the year. Their support of the brave citizen soldiers serving in Iraq deserves recognition. The support of our troops almost always goes unnoticed. I noticed. Many of my colleagues also noticed and we offer our sincerest thanks to Captain Pentecost, his wife, and their supporters at Bell, Boyd and Lloyd.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LEONARD
S. FIORE, INC.

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. on its 50th Anniversary and to thank the general contracting corporation for its numerous contributions to the community.

For more than four decades, Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. has maintained a strong commitment to people, hard work, and education. The company was founded by Leonard Fiore Sr. in 1954 upon the principle of providing efficient, top quality work at a reasonable cost, and the progress that it has made in the past fifty years confirms the company's dedication to this principle. In 1957 the company completed its first commercial construction project with the erection of the Altoona Skating Center and the St. Rose of Lima Church in Altoona. Since that date, the company has expanded its capabilities and heightened its goals tremendously, having provided jobs to over 250 people and completed over 300 commercial buildings.

As one of central Pennsylvania's leading general contractors, Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. offers demolition, excavation, concrete and steel erection, masonry, carpentry, metal stud and drywall work as well as plastering, painting, and a certified surveyor. Devoted to the belief that "no job is too large, no need too small," every job that the company undertakes receives the same enthusiasm and quality of workmanship. Regardless of the task at hand, the experience and expertise of each and every employee guarantees every project to be completed with the best possible results.

In addition to the organization's excellence in its industry, it has remained extremely loyal to the surrounding community. Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. regularly supports Saint Francis College in Loretto, PA, and Bishop Guilfoyle High School in Hollidaysburg, PA, providing them with financial assistance and volunteer services. Additionally, the company sponsors local little league baseball teams, the Tour de Toona bicycle race, and the annual Fiore Family Golf Classic, which is a popular event that raises money for various community services. Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. has demonstrated

an unyielding enthusiasm and care for the public which it serves.

For its incomparable generosity, service to the community, and unabated commitment to excellence, Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. deserves the highest recognition. The company continues to grow and maintain a high level of quality, providing an example that all businesses should follow. I congratulate Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. on its 50th Anniversary and eagerly await its future progress.

MARITIME SECURITY PROGRAM

HON. W.J. (Billy) TAUZIN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my appreciation to Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER of the House Armed Services Committee for his successful efforts to reauthorize the Maritime Security Program (MSP) in the recently-passed National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004. The vitally important MSP program will ensure that militarily-useful, United States flag commercial vessels crewed by American citizens are available for this Nation's military and national security needs.

In the MSP program reauthorization, the Congress has ensured that no unreasonable impediments stand in the way of obtaining U.S.-flag roll-on/roll-off, container and other militarily-useful MSP vessels for the transport of military vehicles, supplies and other materiel in support of U.S. military operations around the world. Chairman HUNTER's support was vital to our efforts to clarify the original intent of certain vessel equipment provisions in the Maritime Security Act of 1996 that first created the MSP program. Specifically, it is now clear that existing vessels built to international standards may be documented under the United States flag for inclusion in the MSP program when the telecommunications and other electronic equipment on such vessels meets internationally accepted standards.

As Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, and with my dear colleague from Louisiana, Congressman VITTER, we worked closely with Chairman HUNTER to ensure that appropriate telecommunications and other electronic equipment standards are applied to MSP vessels. When the MSP program was originally enacted, the law provided that a vessel that meets internationally accepted construction and equipment standards may be reflagged under the United States flag for operation in the MSP. That provision was intended to apply to all vessel equipment, including telecommunication and other electronic equipment. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 now clarifies that matter.

Accordingly, it is now clear that a vessel may be added to the U.S.-flag commercial fleet for operation in the MSP program if it is built to international standards, and the telecommunications and other radio equipment aboard the vessels comply with applicable international Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention requirements. This is in keeping with the elimination of financial and other burdens that the Congress specifically sought to remove through the establishment of the Maritime Security Program. I would like to again

thank Chairman HUNTER and his staff for working closely with us on this matter of critical importance to the military and national security of the United States.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GORDON PARKS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of this nation's most distinguished talents in commemoration of his birthday. As a renowned photographer, poet, author, filmmaker and composer, Gordon Parks has secured his place in American society as a true Renaissance man of the arts. Born on November 30, 1912 in Kansas, Mr. Parks grew up the youngest of fifteen children in an environment stricken by poverty and racism. With the guidance of his loving, inspiring parents, he persevered despite his circumstances.

Gordon Parks began his photographic journey at the age of 25, when he bought his first camera, affectionately referred to as his "weapon against poverty and racism." This simple instrument did just that, allowing him to break the constraints of discrimination and rise to greatness as an artist. In 1941, Mr. Parks became the first photographer to receive a fellowship from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation and the following year, he was commissioned by the Farm Security Administration to create a visual record of the lives of America's poor in urban and rural communities. During this project, he captured one of his most popular, compelling photographs, American Gothic, the image of Ella Watson standing in front of the American flag, holding a broom.

He moved on to become the first Black photographer to work at both Life and Vogue Magazines where he coined his unique style of focusing a series on one person to convey a story of humanity. Aside from chronicling the intense emotions of America's poorest, the civil rights movement and the surge of Black Nationalism, Mr. Parks' photographic repertoire also featured images of leading societal figures such as Langston Hughes, Duke Ellington, Ingrid Bergman, Barbara Streisand, Mohammed Ali, and Marcel Duchamp.

Gordon Parks tried his hand in cinema, making eleven films, including "The Learning Tree", based on his autobiographical novel, and the 1971 film, "Shaft". Mr. Parks has also published twelve books, three about his life, and several are collections of poetry and photography. Musically inclined, Gordon Parks also composed a number of sonatas, concertos, a symphony and a ballet, all of which have been performed internationally.

Mr. Parks has also received a number of awards for his outstanding contributions, including: Photographer of the Year from the American Society of Magazine Photographers (1960 and 1985), induction into The Black Film Makers Hall of Fame (1973), induction into the NAACP Hall of Fame (1984), Governor's Medal of Honor from the State of Kansas (1985), and honorary degrees from thirteen separate academic institutions.

Gordon Parks now resides in New York City and continues to enjoy the recognition earned